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MAY 3 1954

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT : CIA Field Communications Control System

1. PROBLEM:

Does the existing system of cable and dispatch control constitute an unnecessary and unreasonable impediment to prompt and responsive action and communication for or with the field on matters of administrative support, guidance and control?

2. FACTS:

- a. Control of all communications to and from the foreign field is based upon a requirement that all communications be released by designated Releasing Officers. A Releasing Officer is charged with full responsibility to the Director for the contents of the communication.
- b. The prescribed channel of Agency communications to and from the foreign field is through the Area Divisions of the DD/P and the Divisions normally have "action" responsibility.
- c. Provision has been made for the special handling and release of several highly specialized types of administrative communications. These have been assigned indicators to indicate special releasing authority and handling procedures. These special cases include [redacted] messages to and from the Auditor-in-Chief on sensitive audit reports and instructions, and [redacted] messages to and from the Chief, Finance Division, on technical foreign exchange and fund-caching activities. With these exceptions, the DD/A is the only administrative official authorized to release communications to the field, and this authority is generally exercised only when an administrative matter of great significance or one requiring the authority of the DD/A is involved.
- d. Incoming cables and dispatches are delivered directly to Area Divisions where they are registered and analyzed for distribution. When the text reveals that administrative action is necessary, an

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information copy is usually sent to the country Branch concerned and the action copy to the Area Division administrative staff. The latter then undertakes to ensure that appropriate action is taken. Under the existing concept of communications control, information copies of incoming cables may be sent by the Cable Secretariat directly to an Administrative component or staff if the text clearly reveals that the message is intended to convey information to a specific Administrative component. There is no requirement, however, that such action be taken by the Cable Secretariat, and primary responsibility rests with the Area Division to bring appropriate information to the attention of non-DD/P Agency officials whose responsibilities may be involved in any specific message. With respect to incoming dispatches, the determination as to whether information copies should be distributed to non-DD/P Agency components is a matter for the judgment and discretion of the Area Division. Exceptions, of course, are specific reports which Agency regulations prescribe shall be submitted to designated components. These are routinely forwarded to the proper recipient after review at either or both the Division and Branch levels.

- e. Responsibility for taking action on an incoming message or for initiating a reply rests, in most instances, with the DD/P and, through him, with the Chief of the Area Division. Accordingly it is usually discretionary with the Area Division whether it prepares replies to the field on administrative matters or invites the administrative component concerned to draft the reply.

3. DISCUSSION:

- a. A survey has been made among the DD/A components and staffs as to their problems and experiences in transmitting and receiving information to and from the field which involve the direct exercise and fulfillment of their administrative authorities and responsibilities. The Office of the Comptroller and the Office of Logistics are the two DD/A components which have a substantial and continuing need to transmit or participate in the transmission of administrative advice and instructions to the field. These surveys reflect both normal, and recurring abnormal, experiences of these administrative components in communicating with the field. The major findings are as follows:

- (1) The normal monthly volume of cable and dispatch traffic to and from the field properly requiring direct action or reply by administrative components is very extensive. Statistics for February 1954 on the Comptroller's Office, for example, show:

	<u>CABLES</u>	<u>DISPATCHES</u>
To Field	336	697
From Field	358	867

- (2) Cables initiated by administrative components are generally released within 24 hours by the Area Divisions. Cables are also delivered promptly to administrative components when the Area Division does not itself undertake to reply to a technical administrative cable. However there have been isolated instances wherein cables released by DD/A have been held by an Area Division for 10 days to 2 weeks without advice to DD/A.
- (3) The delay between the completion of a coordinated administrative dispatch by an administrative component and its transmission from the Agency appears to average $10\frac{1}{2}$ days. The delay between the arrival of incoming administrative dispatches and their delivery to the administrative component concerned averages $13\frac{1}{2}$ days. However there have been isolated instances wherein dispatches released by DD/A have been held by an Area Division for weeks without advice to the DD/A that they had not been released. In one instance a Senior Representative complained to DD/A that he had not been advised as to his allowances, etc. Investigation on 1 March 1954 revealed that the information was contained in a "letter of instruction" signed by the Director on 2 January 1954 but not forwarded by the Area Division.
- (4) There are many types of continuing administrative correspondence which involve absolutely no policy or security matters which appear to be needlessly delayed by being channeled through Area Division coordination and control machinery. This traffic consists of clearly identifiable routine technical reports and forms concerning payroll matters, travel vouchers, and other purely administrative information and reports.
- (5) The administrative staffs of the Area Divisions not infrequently assume primary responsibility for initiating or taking action called for by incoming traffic even though in some cases they are neither technically nor functionally competent to do so. In not infrequent instances, action is taken by the Area Division and replies are sent to the field without the knowledge of the administrative component concerned. More frequently the Area Division administrative staffs undertake to staff out and prepare all replies to administrative traffic; touching base with the proper administrative office only for superficial advice or last-minute coordination. The administrative office is thereby denied enough information, or time, to give the matter proper consideration. Erroneous, ambiguous and inadequate replies and actions appear to be the not infrequent result.

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- b. Numerous surveys conducted by the former Management Improvement Staff of the duties and functions of the Area Division administrative staffs consistently show that a substantial workload could be eliminated if limited releasing authority were given to administrative components for purely technical administrative communications. It is recognized, however, that overseas clandestine activities are so fraught with matters of operational policy and security that only carefully delineated types of routine administrative communications could possibly be freed from screening by operating officials. The surveys indicate, nevertheless, the probability that the Area Division administrative staffs are wasting time and effort in handling correspondence which can be better prepared and coordinated, and possibly released, by officials in administrative components.
- c. The Chief of the Administrative Staff, EE Division, has advised that detailed statistics maintained by that Division show that 5 working days elapse between the time that a dispatch is received at FI/RI and its delivery to the Division registry. This indicates that some of the delay in processing dispatches may be attributable to other than Area Division control and processing procedures.
- d. A recent staff study by the Inspector General concerning "The Reduction in Cable Traffic" contained the following statements:
 - (1) "[There is a] tendency of individuals to allow incoming dispatches and cable traffic to go unanswered for such a period of time that it becomes necessary to send a cable in answer to recoup lost time.
 - (2) "The relatively long time period to transmit dispatches plus the amount of time it takes from the point where a division writes dispatches and it goes through the coordinating process and finally arrives at Registry for transmittal appears to discourage a certain amount of dispatch traffic.
 - (3) "[It is recommended] that DD/P and DD/A^(~) reexamine their procedures for incoming handling of dispatch material to ensure its arrival at the action point at the earliest possible moment, ...that they reexamine the procedures by which dispatches are routed and coordinated between point of origin and arrival at the proper Registry for overseas dispatching."

These findings of the Inspector General substantiate some of the discussions and conclusions presented in this study. The cited recommendations of the Inspector General appear to be sound but, under the existing system of communications control, the A-DD/A can take only limited corrective action.

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- e. A review of the cable control system in terms of the organizational structure of CIA appears to reveal policy inconsistencies. Whereas the Area Division is necessarily the proper channel through which communications should pass for operational and security review, it does not necessarily follow that they should assume "action" responsibility and releasing authority for all communications. CIA delegations of authority and responsibility vest primary responsibility for many administrative and technical functions with components outside of the DD/P complex. Since the releasing official has full responsibility to the Director for the contents of communications, releasing authority for non-operational communications might well be delegated more widely to certain non-DD/P officials.

4. CONCLUSIONS:

That there are factors in the existing system of communications control which are a significant cause for:

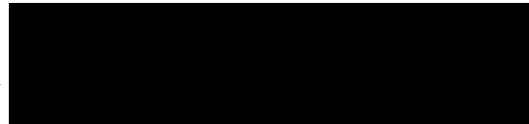
- a. Delay in taking administrative actions required by field communications and in getting prompt replies to the field.
- b. Failure to provide administrative components with adequate, timely and complete information on field administrative problems, a fact which in turn leads to tardy, improper or incorrect administrative action or replies.
- c. Confusion between Area Division administrative staffs and the administrative components of the DD/A with respect to responsibility for initiating action or replies in response to communications from the field; this fosters inadequately coordinated, inadequately planned, and tardy actions.

5. ACTION RECOMMENDED:

- a. That a thorough study be made of the technical, operational, security and command problems involved in the present system of communications control to establish such sound and valid principles as should properly dictate the type of control system the Agency should have.
- b. That the existing procedural and control systems for handling both cable and dispatch communications be carefully studied and revised in terms of the principles established above in order to:
 - (1) Transfer "action" responsibility for non-operational communications from the Area Divisions to the appropriate Agency component.

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- (2) Ensure that information copies and/or action copies of all communications bearing on administrative matters are delivered promptly to the administrative components whose technical responsibilities or authorities are concerned.
- (3) Release certain types of routine administrative reports, forms, field accountings, etc., from the usual intra-Division flow of documents in order to expedite delivery to the administrative component for whom they are intended.
- (4) Standardize the communications control and processing systems within the Area Divisions to eliminate bottlenecks and provide a more effective follow-up system.
- (5) Consider the possibility that more extensive delegation of releasing authority to non-DD/P officials for non-operational communications would more properly reflect the assignment of responsibilities within CIA, and would lead to more responsive and better coordinated informational instructions to the field.



L. K. WHITE
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